

possible for him to take part in a contest which it was evident would again be renewed either with Prussia or Austria.

Every person of common sense must have perceived that Austria, in taking up arms, reckoned, if not on the assistance, at least on the neutrality of Russia. Russia was then engaged with two enemies, the Swedes and the Turks, over whom she hoped to triumph. She therefore rejoiced to see France again engage in a struggle with Austria, and there was no doubt that she would take advantage of any chances favorable to the latter power to join her in opposing the encroachments of France. I never could conceive how, under those circumstances, Napoleon could be so blind as to expect assistance from Russia in his quarrel with Austria. He must, indeed, have been greatly deceived as to the footing on which the two Courts stood with reference to each other — their friendly footing and their mutual agreement to oppose the overgrowing ambition of their common enemy.

The English, who had been compelled to quit Spain, now returned there. They landed in Portugal, which might be almost regarded as their own colony, and marched against Marshal Soult, who left Spain to meet them. Any other man than Soult would perhaps have been embarrassed by the obstacles which he had to surmount. A great deal has been said about his wish to make himself King of Portugal. Bernadotte told me, when he passed through Hamburg, that the matter had been the subject of much conversation at headquarters after the battle of Wagram. Bernadotte placed no faith in the report, and I am pretty sure that Napoleon also disbelieved it. However, this matter is still involved in the obscurity from which it will only be drawn when some person acquainted with the intrigue shall give a full explanation of it.¹

¹ On the rather obscure and complicated subject of Soult's conduct in this matter see *Thiers*, tome xi. p. 70, and *Lanfrey*, tome v. p. 93. Soult was dreaming of being made King of Portugal at the request of the Portuguese; some of his officers were watching his conduct, prepared to seize him if he showed any sign of defection, while others had entered into a treacherous correspondence with the English. But Soult's own behavior is quite consistent with loyalty: the elevation of Marat to a throne had opened a wide range of ambition to the Marshals. Metternich (tome ii. p. 4(53) said to Napoleon in 1810, when the choice of Bernadotte for Sweden was in question: